

An Introduction to the Operational Services Division and COMMBUYS User Tips for Vendors

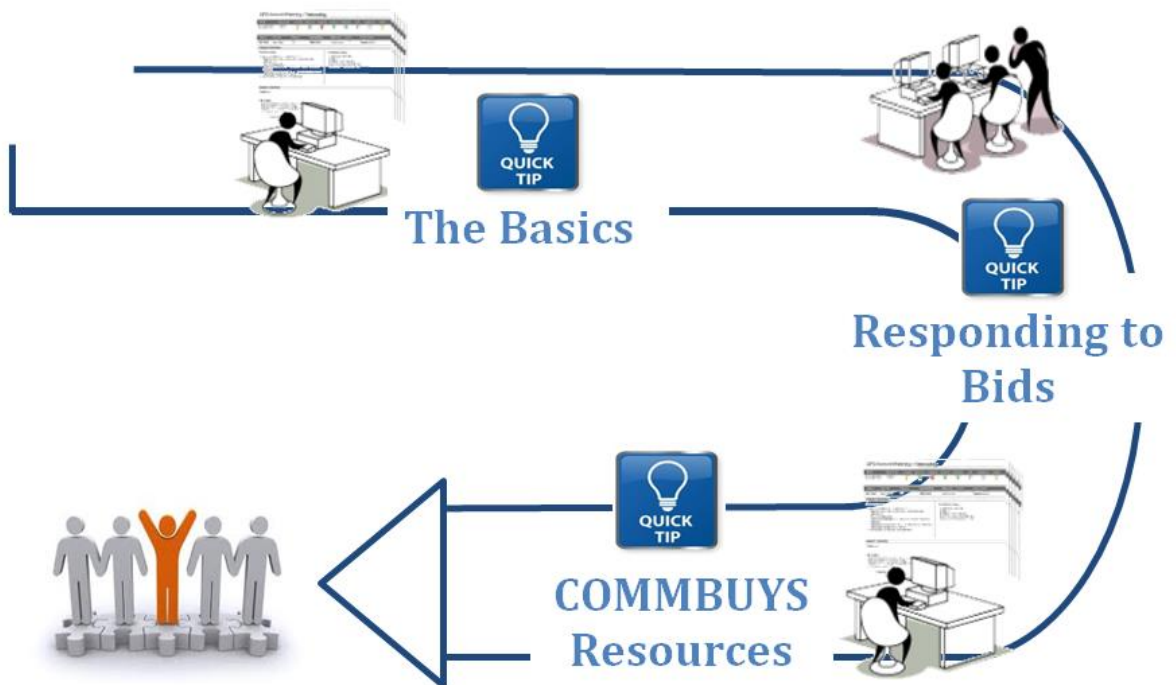


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About the Operational Services Division

The Operational Services Division (OSD) is an oversight agency of the Commonwealth within the Executive Office of Administration and Finance. OSD is comprised of several units which administer a broad range of activities. These include:

- Strategic Sourcing Services - Establish and manage Statewide Contracts (SWCs) for goods and services that meet the broad needs of Commonwealth buyers;
- COMMBUYS Operations - Support online commerce between government purchasers and businesses through the Commonwealth's electronic Market Center, COMMBUYS;
- Enablement Team - Provides outreach assistance to local government purchasers to support their purchasing and procurement activities through SWCs and COMMBUYS;
- Supplier Diversity Office - Administers several business programs that enable diverse and small firms to participate and be more marketable in the public bidding arena, including certifying or enabling other certification entities to certify diverse and small businesses to participate in these programs;
- Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Procurement Program - Promotes the purchase of EPPs to state and local agencies and departments throughout the Commonwealth;
- Office of Vehicle Management - Responsible for the acquisition, administration, leasing, maintenance, and repair of the Executive Branch fleet of light-duty and passenger vehicles;
- Commonwealth Print Services - Offers on-demand printing and copying and graphic design and poster production services from our in-house print shop;
- Surplus Property Program - Ensures the Commonwealth receives best value for items that no longer meet Agency needs;
- Training Department - Provides training to public sector buyers and the business community on the COMMBUYS Market Center and all OSD programs and services;
- Audit and Quality Assurance - Support Purchase of Service contract vendors and Executive Departments in achieving and maintaining compliance with laws, state regulations, and OSD policies;
- Legal, Policy and Compliance Office - Oversees all legal and policy issues, interpreting and ensuring compliance with OSD Statutory Authority, Regulations, and Executive Orders, and OSD policies, including delegation of procurement authority for goods and services;
- Marketing, Communications, and Events - Coordinate outbound messaging to buyer and business communities; manage the OSD website; represent OSD at events for buyers and vendors; and plan, manage, and execute the annual MASSBUYS EXPO.

OSD Mission

Help our government and business customers succeed in meeting their goals by providing outstanding customer service, competent advice and guidance, objectivity in our work, and make available to our customers high quality products and services that exceed the expectations of those whom we serve.

COMMBUYS Market Center

COMMBUYS is an online platform that connects your business to the Massachusetts buyer community. Benefits include:

- Free, online business profile that classifies the goods and services you offer;
- Exposure to thousands of Massachusetts public sector buyers;
- Inclusion in the COMMBUYS online Business Directory;
- Management of the procurement life cycle from posting, to bid submission, to award;
- Automated bid notifications in your area(s) of interest sent to your inbox;
- Electronic delivery of purchase orders for quick and easy order fulfillment;
- Detailed transaction history through online audit trail;
- Identification as a participant in the Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP)*, a designation that may make your organization more marketable in the public bidding arena (if applicable).

All vendors are invited to create a business profile in the COMMBUYS Market Center free of charge. Your registration enables your business to receive solicitation notices in your areas of interest, submit quotes, and participate in the purchasing and procurement process.

** To join the SBPP, complete the brief questionnaire as part of your COMMBUYS registration. Review qualification criteria at mass.gov/sbpp.*

Go to COMMBUYS.com and select the **Register** link to get started.



Vendor Resources on the OSD Website

- Become a COMMBUYS Vendor
- Learn about Bidding Opportunities
- How to Become a Statewide Contractor
- Small Business Purchasing Program
- What the State Buys: Contract User Guides and the Statewide Contract Index
- Complimentary Training Classes
- State Certification

Visit mass.gov/osd/commbuys > [Vendors](#).

COMMBUYS User Tips for Vendors

Section 1: The Basics



Tip 1-1

Maintain an Updated Vendor Profile

All registered vendors should review their COMMBUYS profile regularly to ensure their information is up-to-date and accurate. In particular, the company's Seller Administrator should check the following:

- Your company address is complete;
- You have assigned at least one person to the COMMBUYS "Seller" role to receive updates and bid notifications;
- The name of your business is properly noted in the **Vendor Legal Name** field;
- UNSPSCs specified on your profile are appropriately aligned with the goods/services supplied by your business. The United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC) is a global products and services classification system that OSD utilizes to notify businesses about opportunities posted in the COMMBUYS Market Center.

Reference our COMMBUYS Vendor job aids at mass.gov/osd/commbuys > [COMMBUYS Job Aids](#).



Tip 1-2

Resetting Your COMMBUYS Password

If you have forgotten your log in credentials, COMMBUYS offers a self-service option. Go to **COMMBUYS.com** and select the **Login Assistance** link. On the **Login Help** page, select either **Forgot User ID** or **Forgot Password** and click **Continue**. Users will receive the requested information via email.

Seller Administrators may reset passwords for other Sellers within their business organization by accessing the **Maintain Users** icon under the **Seller Administrator** tab.



Tip 1-3

Learning Opportunities for Vendors

The Operational Services Division (OSD) offers a range of complimentary training opportunities for vendors. View OSD's **Training Calendar** to find available classroom and webinar options and locate COMMBUYS job aids and instructional webcasts. Visit mass.gov/osd > [OSD Training](#) or go to the **COMMBUYS Resource Center**, mass.gov/osd/commbuys > [COMMBUYS Resource Center](#).

Section 1: The Basics



Tip 1-4

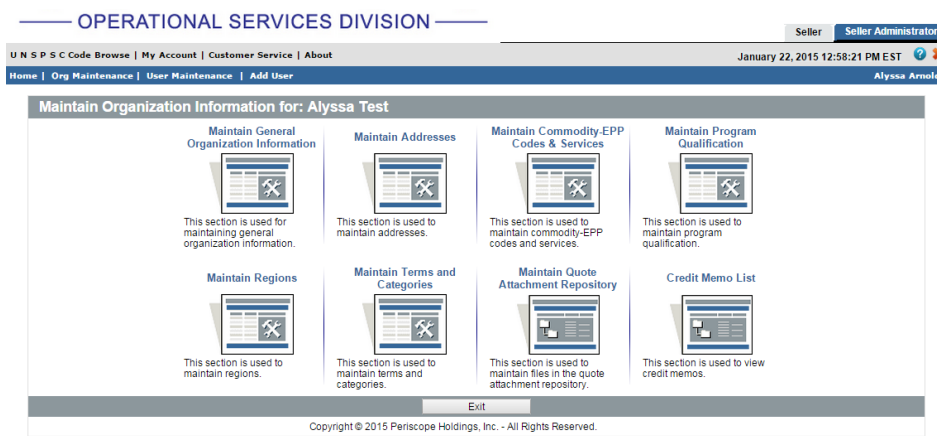
Updating Address and Email Information

Each COMMBUYS business has an associated general mailing address and email address. However, Seller Administrators have the ability to add addresses to their Vendor Profile by category type. This enables vendors, for example, to have bid notifications sent to one email address and purchase order requests sent to another. The following address categories are available:

- Bid Mailing Address
- Purchase Order Mailing Address

Although multiple addresses for each category may be stored in COMMBUYS, the Seller Administrator must designate one as the default address for each address type.

Email/Mailing Address updates are managed under the **Maintain Organization Information** tab.



The Seller Administrator will select the **Maintain Addresses** section, enabling updates to a current email/address. To add a new email/ mailing address, select the **Address Type** and provide the requested information. Click **Save and Exit** after completing the requested information.

Remit Address and Sales Address data may be stored in COMMBUYS for informational purposes.

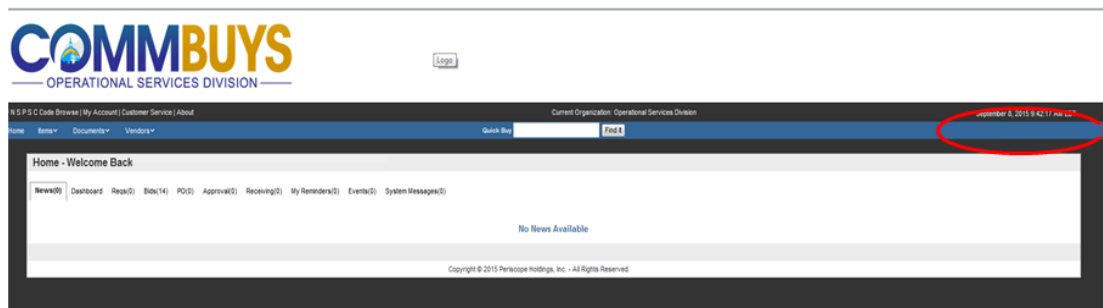
Section 1: The Basics



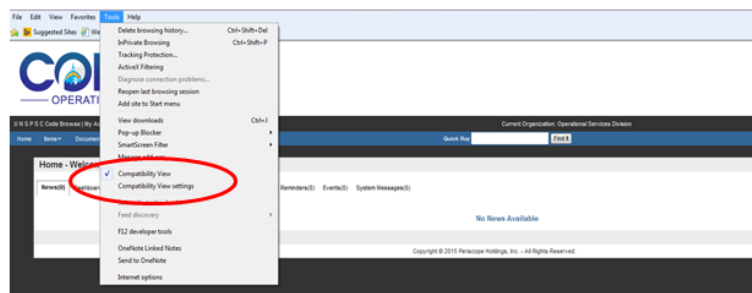
Tip 1-5

Adjusting Compatibility View in Internet Explorer

Users who have enabled Compatibility View on their Internet Explorer (IE) browser will find that their icons are missing from the upper right toolbar in COMMBUYS.

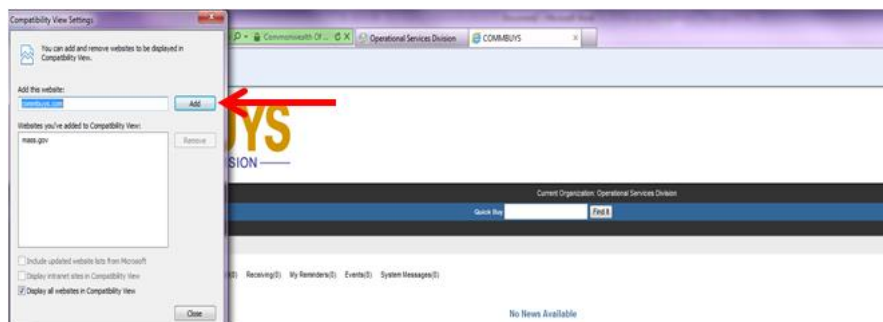


In older versions of IE, there are two items in the **Tools** drop-down menu, **Compatibility View** and **Compatibility View Settings**, which must be reset to allow users to view the COMMBUYS icons.



To deactivate **Compatibility View**:

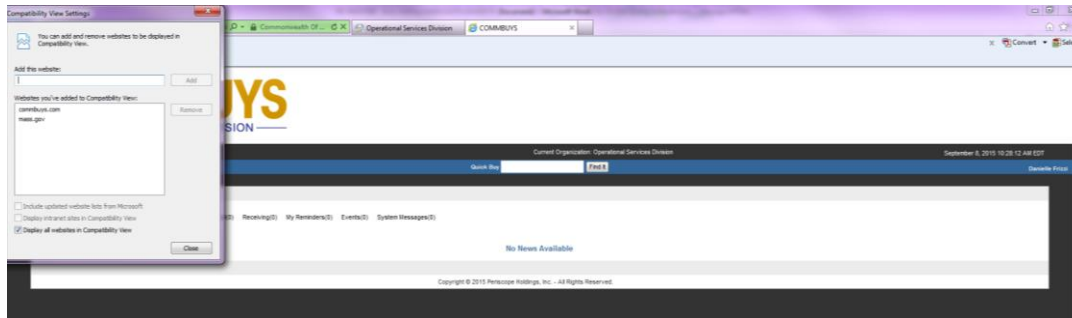
1. Log into COMMBUYS;
2. From the **Tools** drop-down menu, select **Compatibility View** to uncheck/deactivate the setting;
3. From the **Tools** drop-down menu, select **Compatibility View Settings** and click **Add** to include COMMBUYS.com to the **Websites you've added to Compatibility View**.



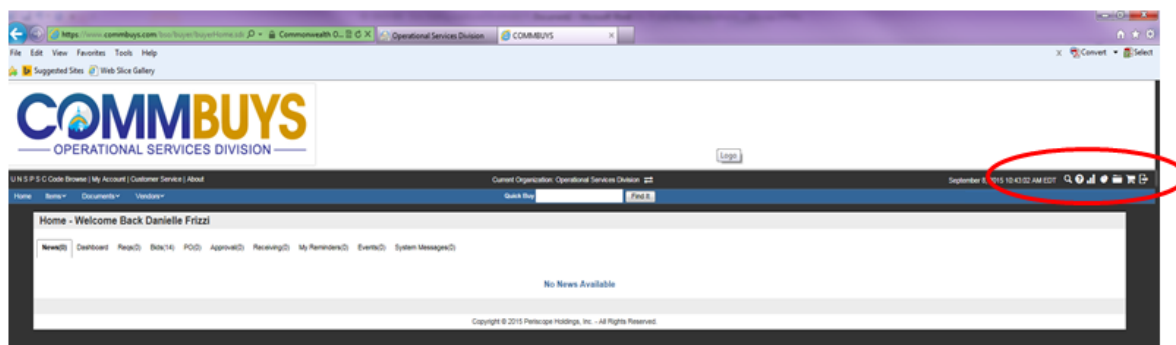
Section 1: The Basics

Adjusting Compatibility View in Internet Explorer (continued)

4. Highlight “COMMBUYS.com”, uncheck **Display all websites in Compatibility view**, and click **Close**.



5. Hit the F5 key to refresh your browser, and the COMMBUYS icons will display.



Tip 1-6

Message Feature in COMMBUYS

On occasion, OSD may post COMMBUYS-related messages to vendors in COMMBUYS. When logged in, messages are accessible from the COMMBUYS dashboard where the number of available messages and summary information are provided. Vendors may read any message in detail by clicking on the **News ID** link.

Home - Welcome Back				
News(1)	Dashboard	Reqs(16)	Bids(76)	PO(25)
Approval(0) Recycling(10052) My Reminders(0) Events(0) System Messages(14461)				
News ID	Effective Date	Category	Title	
1	01/01/2016	Notices	Helpdesk Contact Info	

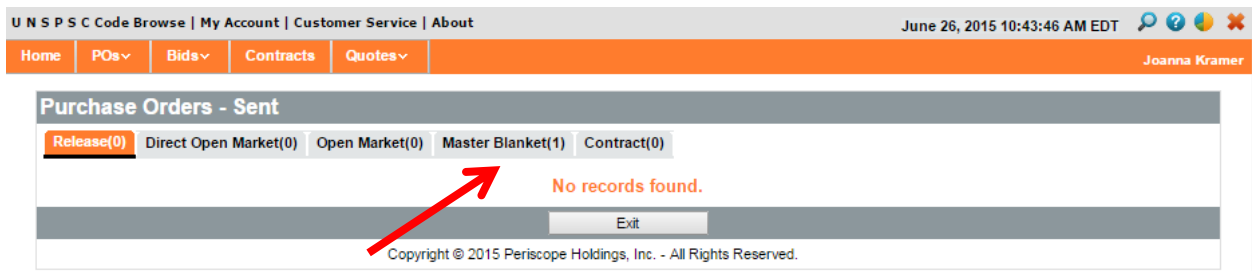
Section 1: The Basics



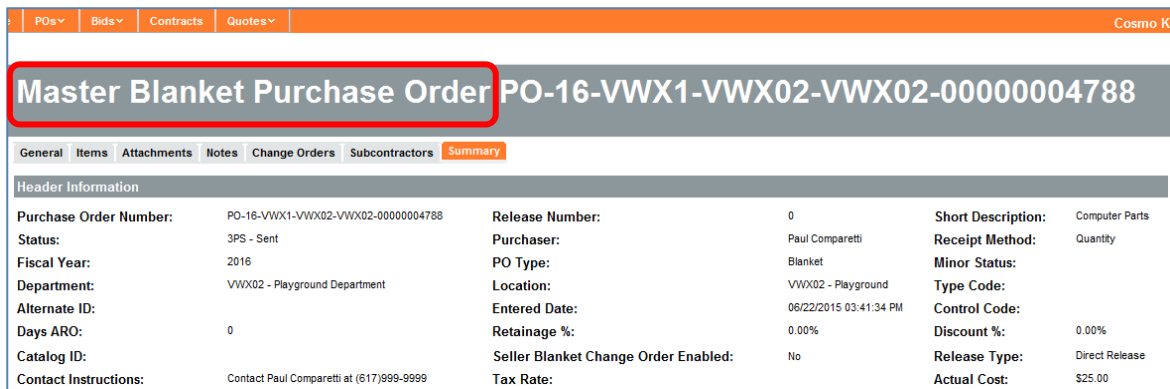
Tip 1-7

Master Blanket Purchase Order Notifications

When Departments establish MBPOs or contract records in COMMBUYS, the vendor(s) on the contracts will receive Master Blanket Purchase Order notifications on their COMMBUYS dashboard. This Master Blanket notification is automatically generated after the contract record is set up in COMMBUYS, and is **not** a purchase order that requires fulfillment.



When opened by the vendor, this purchase order type is labeled **Master Blanket Purchase Order**.



Section 2: Responding to Bids



Tip 2-1

Bid Opening Date/Time and Quote Submissions

When a buyer posts a bid opportunity in COMMBUYS, a **Bid Opening Date/Time** is assigned. Vendors should be mindful that buyers may only consider bid responses that are complete and have been submitted in COMMBUYS by the specified **Bid Opening Date/Time**.

The system date and time is displayed in the top right corner of the COMMBUYS dashboard. Once the system time passes the **Bid Opening Date/Time**, the ability to submit a quote is disabled.



Tip 2-2

Viewing Bids after the Bid Opening Date

After the bid opening date, vendors may not be able to view information about a bid when logged in to COMMBUYS. However, businesses may access bid information, such as Intent to Award announcements, for example, via the public search.



Tip 2-3

Designating Documents as Confidential When Preparing a Quote in COMMBUYS

When vendors prepare quote submissions in response to bids in COMMBUYS, they may be including confidential documents as part of their submissions.

When uploading documents on the **Attachments** tab, vendors should designate whether a document should be considered confidential by selecting the checkbox under the **Confidential** column for each confidential document.

General Items Questions Subcontractors Notes Terms & Conditions **Attachments(5)** Summary [Back to Bid](#)

i Marking an item "Confidential" will ensure the document is only seen by relevant personnel and will not be displayed publicly.

Files		
Name	Description	Confidential
EFT Form	Authorization for Electronic Funds Transfer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
W9 Form	Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (W-9)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commonwealth Terms & Conditions	Commonwealth Terms & Conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organization chart		<input type="checkbox"/>
RFR - Main Response Document		<input type="checkbox"/>

Please note: Only items exempt from the public record law should be marked confidential.

Section 2: Responding to Bids



Tip 2-4

“No Bid” Elections on Quotes in COMMBUYS

When preparing a quote, there are two areas in COMMBUYS where vendors may select “No Bid.” Vendors should note that these selections affect the buyer’s ability to award the submitted quote and are encouraged to review the information below to avoid submitting a “No Bid” quote in error.

“No Bid” on an Item

When vendors prepare their quote, COMMBUYS, by default, checks off “No Bid” for every **item** on the **Items** tab and the vendor must take action to change “No Bid” to the desired price or “No Charge”^{*} for items they are quoting. Quotes may be submitted even if “No Bid” is selected for all items. However, the system **will not** allow the buyer to make an award recommendation for “No Bid” selected items.

Item #	Print Sequence	Questions Exist	Description							No Bid	No Charge
			Quantity	UOM	Unit Cost	Discount %	Tax Rate	Freight	Extended Amount		
1	1.0	No	1.0	EA	0.00	0.00		0.00	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternate Description:											

“No Bid” on the Entire Quote

Vendors also have the option to select “Is ‘No Bid’” on the **General** tab of their quote. This checkbox **should not** be selected when submitting a quote as the quote **will not** appear in the buyer’s **Bid Tabulation**, the area in COMMBUYS where submitted quotes are compiled for evaluation. Additionally, the system **will not** allow the buyer to make an award recommendation for any of the items in a quote with “Is ‘No Bid’” selected.

General	Items	Questions	Subcontractors	Notes	Terms & Conditions	Attachments
Quote #: QT-1080-OSD03-OSD03-00000000783						
Organization: Operational Services Division						
Status: Submitted						
Delivery Days: 0						
Is "No Bid": <input type="checkbox"/>						
Shipping Terms:						
Ship Via Terms:						

If vendors need to make changes to their quote prior to the **Bid Opening Date**, they may withdraw their quote, make the desired changes, and resubmit their bid (See Tip 2-8). Vendors who realize that they submitted a “No Bid” quote in error after the **Bid Opening Date** should notify the buyer. The buyer’s ability to recognize and evaluate such a quote will depend on the procurement laws, regulations, and policies that apply to the organization and procurement in question.

^{*}“No Charge” is used when pricing details are summarized in the quote attachment or when there is no charge for a particular item.

Section 2: Responding to Bids



Tip 2-5

Bid Notifications and Vendor UNSPSC Selections

An important part of your COMMBUYS Vendor Profile includes selection of one or more United Nations Standard Products and Services Codes (UNSPSC), a global products and services classification system the OSD utilizes to notify businesses about opportunities posted in the COMMBUYS Market Center.

Proper selection of UNSPSCs is vital as **your business will only receive bid opportunity emails in your chosen areas of interest based on your UNSPSC selections**. Even if a commodity code seems only slightly related to a product or service offered by your business, it is beneficial to select that code to ensure your business receives the email alerts of bidding opportunities for that good or service.



Tip 2-6

Maintain Vendor UNSPSC

Seller Administrators may update their chosen UNSPSCs at any time and may utilize the UNSPSC Look-Up Tool for selection assistance (See Tip 3-2). Guidance to add or inactivate current codes in COMMBUYS is available in the *Review and Maintenance of UNSPSC* job aid: mass.gov/osd/commbuys > **COMMBUYS Job Aids**.



Tip 2-7

Help for Vendors Responding to Bids

OSD offers a COMMBUYS training course, a 16-minute webcast, and a job aid to assist vendors when responding to bids in COMMBUYS. Find these and other training resources at mass.gov/osd > [OSD Training](#).

Section 2: Responding to Bids



Tip 2-8

Quote Amendments Prior to the Bid Opening Date/Time

If vendors need to make changes to their quote prior to the **Bid Opening Date/Time**, they may withdraw their quote, make the desired changes, and resubmit their bid. Quote modifications to the **General**, **Items**, **Questions**, and **Attachment** tabs are permissible in order to provide additional information, modify data, ask questions, or change attachments. Vendors should reference the *How to Withdraw, Reopen, and Resubmit a Quote* job aid found in the **COMMBUYS Resource Center**: mass.gov/osd/commbuys > [COMMBUYS Resource Center](#).



Tip 2-9

Finding Small Business Opportunities

Beginning March 2016, Executive Departments are prompted to identify Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) bids during the bid set-up process, introducing the ability for businesses to search for Small Business bids in COMMBUYS.

Learn more about this new search functionality and the SBPP on OSD's blog on mass.gov/osd. Search "Small Business."

Section 3: COMMBUYS Resources



Tip 3-1

COMMBUYS Resource Center

Have you visited the COMMBUYS Resource Center lately? Visitors may easily access instructional webcasts and job aids on recurring vendor activities and link to the OSD Training Calendar. Visit mass.gov/osd/commbuys > [COMMBUYS Resource Center](#).



Tip 3-2

UNSPSC Tool for Vendors and Buyers

OSD uses United Nations Standard Products and Services Codes (UNSPSC) to classify goods and services in COMMBUYS. Purchasers use these codes when preparing bids and vendors select UNSPSCs to receive notifications of bidding opportunities that align with their businesses.

OSD has developed an easy-to-use tool to assist both buyers and vendors in identifying UNSPSC information associated with commodities and services. Users may find the UNSPSC Look-up Tool and instructions for its use on COMMBUYS.com, as well as the [COMMBUYS Resource Center](#).



Tip 3-3

COMMBUYS Help Desk

Help Desk assistance is available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday. Reach the COMMBUYS Help Desk via email at COMMBUYS@state.ma.us or call 1-888-627-8283.



www.mass.gov/osd

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